

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the Title as follows:

IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD FOR EMBEDDING A DIGITAL WATERMARK

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace the paragraph at page 1, lines 9-21, with the following rewritten paragraph:

There is known prior-art technology for copyright protection. That is, information, which is other than content data such as audio data or video data and is indicative of the name of the copyright holder, permission/non-permission of copy, etc., is embedded in the content data. ~~As regards~~ **Regarding** still image data, information relating to the image data, the copyright, etc., is embedded in the image data. The embedded information is read from the content data. As an example of such technology, "digital watermark" is effective. In particular, in the field of audio data and video data, the standardization and practical use of digital watermarking has been developed.

Please replace the paragraph starting at page 1, line 22 through page 2, line 6, with the following rewritten paragraph:

However, in the field of still image data, compared to content data, the standardization of digital watermarking methods ~~[[has]]~~ **are** delayed. Under the circumstances, a relatively popular technique, which has already been practiced, is configured such that the values of low-order bits are changed, thereby embedding information. According to this technique, there is no problem ~~as regards~~ **regarding** "soft" copy of data in file format. However, ~~as regards~~ **regarding** hard copy, which involves use of printers, there is a danger that embedded signals may be lost due to the effect of noise or modulation characteristics.